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ABSTRACT

The first year of an ongoing 3-year study focused on the attitudes of Native American preservice teachers toward the inclusion of language and culture in schooling, how teacher preparation programs impact these attitudes, and components of teacher education programs that meet the needs of Native students. Data were gathered via surveys of 232 American Indian, Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiian preservice teachers enrolled in 27 teacher preparation programs in 12 states; interviews with program directors; and document analysis. Fifteen of the programs were based at tribal colleges. Preliminary results indicate that the vast majority of the sample felt that Native language and culture should be included, in some manner, in the schooling of Native students. However, only a very small percentage of respondents felt professionally prepared for this undertaking as they approached their induction year as teachers. Slightly more than half of the teacher education programs focused specifically on methodology and pedagogy to facilitate the integration of Native culture, and less than half provided training in techniques for teaching Native languages, English as a second language, or bilingual education. Data from this first phase of the project will guide participant selection for case studies to be undertaken in the second phase, which will examine factors in teaching environments that support or thwart teacher efforts to situate learning within the local context. (Contains 30 references) (TD)

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Native Educators
Interface with Culture and Language in Schooling

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Abstract

It is understood that when teaching is grounded in the heritage culture and language of the students, the acquisition of knowledge and the development of identity are enhanced. This understanding is born out of the educational traditions of indigenous peoples and is affirmed today by research in the field of American Indian, Alaska Native, and Hawaiian Native education. It follows from this understanding that the probability of situating education within the context of the Native student's culture and language is greater when the teacher shares the students' culture. This three-year project located at Arizona State University's Center for Indian Education explores the reality of this possibility as it occurs in situations across the country when American Indian, Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiian pre-service teachers undergo professional training and take their places as teachers in classrooms of predominantly Native students. It is anticipated that the findings from this study will lead the way toward sound models and effective practices in the professional development of Native teachers.

The greatest need in the education of K-12 Native/Tribal students is:

> *"Incorporating traditional life with the world outside our communities. We need to give our kids examples and correlations between traditional and Western society. They need to realize the need to function in both worlds to be overall successful. You do not have to give up one thing for the other."*
>
> *"Supportive and understanding teachers who will respect the students and their culture in a school setting."*
>
> *"More educators who can relate to the backgrounds of our society and children, educators who will not form judgments on others, more Native educators who provide care in a positive manner."*
>
> *"Learning their own culture."*
>
> *"Understanding who they are."*
>
> *"Native teachers and administrators. A teacher who is to teach Native things should be a Native. You have to live it in order to teach it."*

These statements represent the responses of American Indian pre-service teachers on a questionnaire administered to more than 500 such individuals enrolled in professional development programs aimed at increasing the number of Native teachers in the classrooms of American Indian students. The members of this select group will become the vanguards in a movement to find effective ways of educating Native youth within systems where "all students will be expected to succeed" (Demmert, 2001, p. 3) and wherein the transmission of "Native culture and knowledge" and the development of "the skills and talents needed to function successfully in modern tribal society and in the multiple societies of the United States and the world" will be inclusively embraced (Charleston, 1994, p. 30). Within such a system, teachers are viewed as the most essential link between the aspects of community and the processes of schooling (Pavel, 1999). Swisher and Tippeconnic (1999) note the interaction between teachers and learners is a basic determinant of whether students will persist or not and add: "We believe that a good teacher is a good teacher, but when there is a good Native teacher, the relationship between Native student and teacher is enhanced" (Swisher & Tippeconnic, 1999, p. 302). The critical nature of this relationship has emerged in the findings of many ethnographic studies in the field of American Indian education over the past 30 years (Bowker, 1993; Cleary & Peacock, 1998; Coburn & Nelson, 1989; Coladarci, 1983; Deyhle, 1992; Dumont & Wax, 1976; Erickson & Mohatt, 1982; Philips, 1983; Swisher, Hoisch, &

Pavel, 1991; Wax, Wax, & Dumont, 1964; Wilson, 1991). Theses studies represented an enlightened move away from earlier prevailing research models of deficit theory that assumed the locus of academic failure "lies with the indigenous individual or community rather than with other social or structural issues" (Smith, 1999, p. 92). They instead focus on differences between home and school cultures and the attendant power relations as they affect school performance—a model congruent with the tenets of a postcolonial research paradigm which accepts and legitimizes Native worldview and values Native epistemological forms (Duran & Duran, 1995, p. 1,6).

Demmert (2001) has noted that a related body of "research on the influences of Native language and cultural programs on academic performance is growing in both volume and importance" (p. 9).

> The studies include both qualitative and quantitative research, which shed light on two interrelated interests: (1) the struggles of a growing number of Native American communities to maintain or strengthen their traditional languages and cultural heritages and (2) the relationship between strengthening traditional Native identities and improving educational outcomes for Native children." (p. 9).

Many studies indicate that grounding educational experiences in heritage languages and cultures bears a strong relationship to healthy identity formation (Hampton, 1995; Kawagley, 1999) and academic success (Barnhardt, 1999; Cleary & Peacock, 1998; Hakuta, 1996; Reyhner, 1990; McCarty, Yamamoto, Watahomigie, & Zepeda, 1997).

The incorporation of Native cultures, languages, and values are vital attributes of many Indian education programs today and the professional training of teachers to meet this challenge has become a high priority. This direction has been forged through the efforts of many Native people and has affected federal policy. The 1998 Executive Order on American Indian and Alaska Native Education was influenced by the "Comprehensive Federal Indian Education Policy Statement" that resulted from a two-year process of meetings among tribal leaders, members, and organizations nationwide. The Order articulated the government's commitment to improving academic performance and reducing the dropout rate of American Indian and Alaska Native students. It served as the impetus for the American Indian Teacher Corp initiative to train more Native teachers and place them in schools with high concentrations of Native students. The Order also called for a comprehensive research agenda to "establish baseline data on academic achievement and retention" and to evaluate "promising practices" and the "role of native language and culture in the development of educational strategies" (Cohen, 2000). The Native Educators Research Project is responsive to this research agenda and is focused on one of the major programmatic initiatives derived from the Executive Order.

The Native Educators Research Project

In the fall of 2001, the Center for Indian Education at Arizona State University was the recipient of a grant from the Office of Educational Research and Improvement (OERI) and the Office of Indian Education (OIE) to conduct research on issues of Native

language and culture in the classroom. The three-year study, which is currently completing its first year, focuses on a large cohort of American Indian, Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiian candidates in teacher preparation programs and investigates how such programs contribute to the development of effective practices for the integration of language and culture.

Research Objectives

The present study attempts to explicate the programmatic elements within the diverse teacher preparation programs that either support or influence change in Native pre-service teachers' attitudes toward the inclusion of language and culture in the learning environment and prepare them to effectively situate their teaching within the cultural context of their students' lives. It additionally examines their experiences as teachers in the varying contexts of their schools and classrooms. The results of this study will lead the way toward sound models and effective practices in the professional development of Native teachers.

Research Questions

The key questions guiding the investigation are:

1. What are the attitudes of Native pre-service teachers toward the inclusion of language and culture in schooling?

2. How do teacher preparation programs impact these attitudes?

3. What are the standard components of programs that evidence their specific interest in meeting the needs of Native students?

4. What factors exist in the teaching environments to support or thwart teachers' efforts to incorporate language and culture or situate learning within the local context?

5. Do the teachers perceive that students' learning, academic achievement, and social development are enhanced by the inclusion of language and culture in their classrooms?

Research during the first year of the project is focused by questions one through three. Questions four and five will be addressed in the second and third years of the study.

Conceptual Framework

This study employs a dualistic conceptual framework in order to properly examine the interaction of language, culture and schooling in a variety of contexts and settings. It is grounded in a cognitive theory of culture wherein culture is defined as both a set of mutually held beliefs, routines, customs, principles of organization and action, as well as each individual's personal expression of them. Culture that is shared by a group consists

of a mutually apprehensible range of standards for perceiving, believing, evaluating and acting. (Goodenough 1981 p. 104).

This view of culture as a system of shared cognitive codes and maps, assumptions about values and world view, and norms of appropriate behavior departs from theories that ultimately reflect culture as a stereotypic, static, objective reality, or a "product" of the carriers of the culture. It is predicated on variation from place to place and from time to time, acknowledging that it exists in every context and plays a role in the way that people function.

The companion perspective is based in the concept of *community-based education*, as defined in relationship to indigenous cultures by David Corson (1999). Essentially, community-based education is a form of social action within a community framework that extends beyond schools as institutions. It allows community members to become self-oriented in the creation of the learning environment that the school offers. Community-based education begins with people and their immediate reality, allowing them to be involved in shaping their own futures through the school and other agencies in the community. As part of meaningful educational reform, it focuses on changing oppressive formal structures. This concept closely parallels the aims of Indian self-determination and reflects major trends in Indian Education policy development from the past ten years.

Methodology

This research was designed to accommodate a dual focus necessary to understanding the dynamic interplay between teacher preparation programs and the individual experience and attitudes of the persons enrolled in them. The general framework relies on standard case study methods such as interviews, observations, and surveys (Stake, 1994). It involves collecting and analyzing quantitative and qualitative data from a variety of time periods and sources, proceeding from individuals, to programs, to schools and classrooms. Component studies focused on individuals, groups, and educational settings serve as embedded units of analysis within the central case study (Yin, 1984). Findings ascend from initial, specific units of analysis, such as perspectives and experiences of the teachers in training, to progressively more general units of the study, such as outputs of teacher training programs, implementation of theory into practice in schools, and ultimately, student learning and social development.

The Researchers. A collaborative team of nine researchers in the field of American Indian education, both Native and non-Native, from six institutions across the country, were assembled to lead the research during the first year of the project. Members of the investigative team serve on faculties at Washington State University, the University of Wisconsin - Milwaukee, the University of Kansas, Northern Arizona University, the University of Alaska – Fairbanks, and Arizona State University. Selected for their known personal commitment to this area of research and their demonstrated scholarly ability, each individual served as a fully participating co-researcher in guiding the project. Each of the individuals assumed responsibility for research sites according to geographic location and prior professional experience with programs or institutions.

The Participants and Sites. The sample is comprised of approximately 500 American Indian, Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiian pre-service teachers. The majority of the participants were enrolled in 27 professional development programs funded by the Office of Indian Education in Wisconsin, Minnesota, North Dakota, South Dakota, North Carolina, Arizona, New Mexico, Washington, Montana, Kansas, Oklahoma, and Idaho. A smaller number of participants were enrolled in six teacher preparation programs in universities or postsecondary institutions in Alaska and Hawaii.

Data Collection and Analysis. Data collection in Phase One, the first year of the study, was geared toward (1) understanding the demographics of the participants and their attitudes toward the place of Native language and culture in schooling, and (2) general descriptive information about the programs in which they are enrolled. Participants were administered a survey consisting of short-answer, Likert-scaled and open ended questions to elicit information of the first type. Program information was obtained through guided interviews with directors and the less obtrusive collection of documents such as syllabi, grant proposals and reports (LeCompte & Schensul, 1999, p. 1-3). Utilizing NUD-IST and SPSS software programs, the quantitative and qualitative data were catalogued, coded, and entered into the appropriate data bases for analysis. Qualitative and quantitative data were integrated as appropriate to produce descriptive statistics related to both individuals and programs (LeCompte & Schensul, 1999, pp. 90-176).

Preliminary Results from Phase One

Research during Year One has focused primarily on administering surveys to the participating pre-service teachers and the collecting information describing the professional development programs in which they were enrolled. The outcomes are responsive to research questions one through three:

1. What are the attitudes of pre-service teachers toward the inclusion of Native languages and cultures in schooling?
2. How do the NTP programs impact these attitudes?
3. What are the standard components of NTP programs that evidence their specific interest in meeting the needs of Native students?

Pre-Service Teacher Surveys

After analysis of the of pilot survey results, the final Pre-Service Teacher's Survey was drafted and distributed to the research team members for administration. Approximately 500 surveys were given to or delivered to the pre-service teachers by the research team members or through the program coordinators or directors, in person or through standard mail service. An initial analysis was performed when 232 surveys were returned; the findings reported here derive from that analysis. Subsequently, six additional surveys were returned for a total of 238, a return rate of 46 percent.

Analysis of the responses from 232 surveys produced a demographic profile of the participants, descriptions of their cultural/linguistic competencies, their attitudes toward the integration of culture and language in schooling, and their opinions regarding the effectiveness of their professional development programs. Some of the more significant preliminary findings include:

Demographic profile.

- Eighty one percent of the respondents were female.
- Nineteen percent of the sample was male.
- Approximately fifty-one percent of the respondents were between the ages of 21 and 30.
- Five percent were 50 years of age or older.
- Forty-four percent were between the ages of 31 and 50.
- Sixty eight percent had children.
- Forty eight percent of the respondents indicated they had prior experience as an Instructional Aide.

Language and cultural aptitude or capability.

- Fifty-nine percent of the respondents understood their Native or tribal language.
- Forty-five percent spoke their Native or tribal language.
- Forty-two percent could read their Native or tribal language.
- Thirty-four percent could write in their Native language.
- Twenty-six percent conversed in their Native/tribal language on a daily basis.
- Seven percent conversed in their Native/tribal language no more than one time a week.
- Sixteen percent seldom conversed in their Native/Tribal language.
- Fifty percent never conversed in their Native/Tribal language.

- Fifty-six percent reported that they are "somewhat/very" to "very" knowledgeable about their own Native/Tribal cultures and traditions.
- Thirty-one percent reported they are "somewhat" knowledgeable about their Native/Tribal cultures and traditions.
- Eleven percent reported they were "not very" to "not very/somewhat" knowledgeable about their Native/Tribal cultures and traditions.

- Only twenty-two percent of the respondent indicated they are "somewhat/very" to "very" knowledgeable about other Native/Tribal cultures and traditions.
- Forty-one percent of the respondents are "somewhat" knowledgeable about other Native/Tribal cultures and traditions,
- Thirty-seven percent are "not very" to "not very/somewhat" knowledgeable.

Attitudes toward the inclusion of Native language and culture in schooling.

- Ninety-five percent of the respondents felt Native/tribal language should be included in the schooling of Native children.
- Five percent felt Native languages should not be taught in school.
- Sixty-four percent felt the primary means of inclusion should be to integrate Native/Tribal language into the classroom curriculum.
- Twenty-six percent recommended that it be taught in school as a separate class.

- Ninety-seven percent felt Native/tribal culture should be included in the schooling of Native children.
- Three percent felt Native culture should not be taught in school.
- Seventy five percent of the respondents felt the primary means of inclusion should be to integrate Native/Tribal language into the classroom curriculum.
- Seventeen percent recommended that it be taught in school as a separate class.

When asked "how important" it is to teach students' Native/tribal language in school:

- Fifty-seven percent of the respondents said it was "very" important.
- Thirty-six percent felt it was "somewhat" to "somewhat/very important."
- Six percent of the respondents felt that it "not very" to "not very/somewhat" important.

When asked "how important" it is to teach students' Native/tribal culture in school:

- Sixty-four percent said it was "very" important.
- Thirty-two percent felt it was "somewhat" to "somewhat/very important."
- Four percent o felt that it "not very/somewhat" important.

When asked "how important" it is to teach students' Native/tribal studies in school:

- Seventy percent said it was "very" important.
- Twenty-seven percent felt it was "somewhat" to "somewhat/very important."
- Two percent felt it was "not very" to "not very/somewhat" important. .

Professional preparation.

Preparation to teach Native/tribal languages:

- Twenty-one percent felt "somewhat/very" to "very well" prepared.
- Sixty-four percent felt "not at all" to "not at all/somewhat" prepared to teach Native/Tribal language.

Preparation to teach Native/tribal culture:

- Thirty-three percent felt "somewhat/very" to "very well" prepared.
- Thirty-eight percent felt "not at all" to "not at all/somewhat" prepared to teach Native/tribal culture.

Preparation to teach Native/tribal studies:

- Thirty-four percent felt "somewhat/very" to "very well" prepared.
- Forty-two percent felt "not at all" to "not at all/somewhat" prepared to teach Native/tribal studies.

Preparation in the area of Native learning styles:

- Forty percent felt "somewhat/very" to "very well" prepared.
- Thirty three percent felt "not at all" to "not at all/somewhat" prepared in the area of Native learning styles.

Preparation in other areas:

- Twenty-five percent felt "somewhat/very" to "very well" prepared to teach English as a second language.
- Forty-five percent felt "not at all" to "not at all/somewhat" prepared to teach English as a second language.

- Fifty-eight percent felt "somewhat/very" to "very well" prepared to teach multicultural education.
- Twelve percent felt "not at all" to "not at all/somewhat" prepared to teach multicultural education.

- Twenty-four percent felt "somewhat/very" to "very well" prepared to teach bilingual education.
- Forty-six percent felt "not at all" to "not at all/somewhat" prepared to teach bilingual education.

- Sixty-one percent felt "somewhat/very" to "very well" prepared to deal with issues of parent and community involvement.
- Twenty-four percent felt they were "not at all" to "not at all/somewhat" being prepared to deal with issues of parent/community involvement.

- Seventy percent felt they were "somewhat/very" to "very well" prepared to utilize cooperative/group instruction strategies.
- Four percent felt they were "not at all" to "not at all/somewhat" prepared to utilize cooperative/group instruction strategies.

The Native Teacher Training Programs

During site visits, research team members gathered various descriptive texts and documents related to the programs. These included the grant proposals, annual reports, and required course lists. Utilizing information contained in the documents together with interviews of the Program Directors or Coordinators, summary reports were to be compiled describing the context, content, and processes unique to each of the programs.

At present, program summaries are complete for 27 of the 33 programs and components in the above three categories are being entered onto a matrix to facilitate an integrated analysis of the programs. A review of state standards relevant to teacher preparation is in progress and will be included in the final summary report of the teacher preparation programs to be completed in the spring of 2003.

Although the analysis is incomplete, the data collected thus far does reveal certain descriptive elements that are important for their relationship to the survey results reported above.

Context. Of the 27 programs reviewed, 10 are situated in colleges of education within state universities; two are in private religious affiliated institutions, and 15 are based at tribal colleges. Many of the tribal colleges are accredited only at the associate degree level and have therefore joined with neighboring universities to offer teacher preparation. Twelve of the tribal college programs are carried out in partnership with state universities and two are partnered with another tribal college accredited at the bachelors level.

Content. The mission statements or statements of purpose for each of the Native teacher preparation programs stress the intent to prepare teachers to be responsive to the needs of Native students. Many specifically articulate a focus on Native language and culture. However, the course content and requirements often do not reflect this intent.

Many of the programs reviewed have general diversity education or multicultural education requirements and purport to integrate Native or tribal values and perspectives into all course work. However, only six of the programs in state universities, nine in tribal colleges, and one in a private institution have specifically articulated course requirements in the areas of Native language, culture, and history. Just twelve of the programs offer or require courses in Native languages, ESL, or bilingual education; eight of these are in tribal colleges, three are in state universities, and one is in a private college. In several cases, these courses meet state or tribal certification requirements for teaching Native languages.

Processes. Nearly all of the programs utilized a combination of field based and classroom learning. The programs that specifically emphasized field experience tended to place more emphasis on the development of community based curriculum and learning experiences. Mentoring by instructors, community members, or classroom teachers was a strong component in many of the programs and distance learning was heavily utilized in nine of the programs.

Discussion of the Preliminary Findings

Due to the incomplete nature of the findings, one must proceed with caution in attempting to perform an integrated analysis of the two bodies of data reported above. With this caution in mind, it is interesting to note that the vast majority of the reported sample feel that Native language and culture should be included, in some manner, in the schooling of Native students. A very small percentage of the respondents, however, felt professionally prepared for this undertaking as they approached their induction year as teachers.

The presently thin body of data regarding the content of the Native teacher preparation programs suggests that slightly more than half of the programs specifically focus on methodology and pedagogy to facilitate the integration of Native culture and less than half provide training in techniques for teaching Native languages, English as a Second Language, or bilingual education.

As the analysis proceeds, attention will be focused on a thorough content analysis of the course requirements and programs of study for each of the Native teacher preparation programs to come to a clearer understanding of the congruence between and among the programs' stated missions, the participants' attitudes and expectations, and the actual nature of the professional preparation offered.

A Reflection on Teacher Education Programs
An Initial Finding

Can two opposing guiding principles in teacher education provide cultural congruence for the same Native population, specifically the same tribe? Can two opposing theories representing opposite ends of a continuum guide the education of Native student teachers to become effective teachers for Native youth? These are two of several significant questions emanating from the initial review of two of the programs included in this study. While proceeding with caution in this initial finding, I could not help but feel that the two programs represent conflicting ideologies which are present in the current political arena of educational theory. In this brief paper, I will describe the two programs, highlight the major similarities and differences, and conclude with a final question.

The first program is located in a border town next to the reservation, yet is surrounded by Native communities from the reservation. The program is located in a satellite institution of a state university. The main purpose of the program is to help Native student teachers develop greater sensitivity for Native American youth and become role models representing successful professionals for the Native American students. The underlying philosophy of the program is to enhance multiculturalism by focusing on constructivism and participatory learning. Utilizing a video camera kit, which is provided by the program, students are trained in ethnographic techniques. The inclusion of language and culture is not particularly stressed especially since many of the Native students do not speak their own language. Native language is provided as an elective.

The second program is located in the same reservation mentioned above and is an important aspect of the mission of a tribal college. It emphasizes language and culture exclusively and utilizes the traditional philosophy of the Native people as its underlying

philosophy. Native language proficiency is important as noted in the varying levels of Native language courses and the prerequisites needed before one can participate in the teaching methods courses. The sacred traditional philosophy is integrated throughout the student's program of study. Not only are student teachers to understand Native values and beliefs; speak, read, and write the language, know culture and history; be able to integrate language, culture, and history with mainstream knowledge through bilingual-bicultural approaches, but most importantly, student teachers are to promote children's academic skills and confident cultural identities. Teachers graduating from this program will provide community based education. The program mentions the need for Native teachers to be both sensitive and role models.

More differences exist between the two programs than similarities. Both programs seem to define "effective teachers" from opposing perspectives. The perspective of the first program, although masked in language of equity, seems to be the same hidden curriculum, the assimilationist curriculum, that has been recycled in the last three hundred years of formal schooling for Native youth. The other program provides space for indigenous dialogue and the development of indigenous identity.

Culturally congruent methodology in the instruction of Native youth is vital for successful educational and schooling experiences for Native youth. Both programs in the long run attempt to alleviate and change the present detrimental schooling experiences of Native youth as seen in drop out rates and test scores. But the nature of the two programs demands that Native educators and all others who are invested in self-determination of indigenous communities revisit the final question: Can we afford to experiment on another generation of Native youth and how do we determine what is appropriate for Native teacher education? Perhaps a clearer understanding of this haunting question will be provided in the next two years of further research and analysis.

Looking Forward – Phase Two of the Research

The baseline data compiled in the first phase of this project will provide the context and the foundation for participant selection for case studies to be undertaken in the second year of the project. The case studies will be instrumental to understanding how teachers, in their induction year, are affected by the issues articulated in research question four:

> What factors exist in the teaching environments to support or thwart the teachers' efforts to incorporate language and culture or otherwise situate learning within the local context?

Data collection will be guided by the following proposition, which has its genesis in the findings from the Pre-service teacher surveys recited above and analyses of the content, context, and processes of the teacher preparation programs in which they were enrolled.

> The new teacher who believes that students' Native language and culture should be integrated in the classroom and who has received professional training to accomplish this will encounter factors within their teaching environment that either support or thwart their efforts.

This proposition allows us to focus on the "uniqueness and complexity" of the participant and their "embeddedness and interaction" with the context (Stake, 1995, p. 16).

Participants and Settings

A total of eight to ten cases studies will be undertaken in locations reflecting the range of cultural and geographic diversity represented by the Native Teacher Preparation Programs that were the focus of Phase One. The teacher will be the unit of study for each of the cases and each case study will be instrumental to understanding how they understand, cope with, utilize, or negotiate the supporting or thwarting factors they encounter.

The majority of the cases will focus on teachers who have a positive attitude toward the inclusion of language and culture and feel that they were prepared to accomplish this. A lesser number of cases will focus on teachers who have a positive attitude toward inclusion but who indicated they were not well prepared. At least one case will focus on a teacher who did not feel that the inclusion of language and culture was desirable or important. In selecting settings, an effort will be made to include as much variety as possible in terms of school type, philosophy and mission, student population, and grade levels.

Data Collection

Data will consist of:

- Documentary evidence reflecting school and district policies regarding language and culture,
- Interviews with individuals from the school and community who affect policy and practices with regards to language and culture as well as teacher induction procedures,
- Observation in the classroom of the participant teacher,
- Participant journals responding to assigned issues related to identification of personal bias, dissonance or congruence they are experiencing.

Analysis

Data related to embedded units of analysis (these will be evolving to some extent but will include supportive and thwarting factors in school and community) will be analyzed first within each case using pattern-matching and explanation-building for that single case. These patterns or explanations will then be compared across cases (Yin, 1994, 119).

Design Quality

Stake (1995) has noted:

> The real business of case study is particularization, not generalization. We take a particular case and come to know it well, not primarily as to how it is different from others but what it is, what it does. There is emphasis on uniqueness, and that implies knowledge of others that the case is different from, but the first emphasis is on understanding the case itself. (p. 8)

A multiple case design, however, produces more compelling evidence and adds robustness to the study (Yin, 1994, pp.44-45). A rigorous protocol will be developed and applied uniformly to all the cases thus promoting reliability of the findings. Training will

be conducted with all of the case study researchers to assure understanding of the protocol (Yin, p. 54). Construct validity will be assured by the use of multiple sources of evidence, repetition of the sources across sites, and review by key informants (Yin, pp. 33-34).

Researcher Mentoring Component

The dialogic techniques utilized during the professional development training experience, enhanced by the cohort organization, will be extended into the case study phase. Each case study researcher will meet with the case participant and other induction year teachers to dialogue on issues related to language and culture and the impact of inclusion on student academic performance. The dialogue may center on "*etic issues* brought in by the researcher" or on *emic issues* identified by the participant that emerge from the dialogue. (Stake, 1995, p. 20)

As a part of this process the participant will be trained in the procedures of "teacher research"—identifying questions about their own teaching and children's learning they would like to research (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1993). The beginning teachers will be mentored in altering pedagogy to include local language, culture, and knowledge in some element of instruction and then assessing the results of the change. This exercise will be recorded and documented in journals and will serve as one embedded unit of analysis for the instant case and across cases.

This mentoring component directs the research toward the fifth research question:

> Do the teachers perceive that students' learning, academic achievement, and social development are being enhanced by the inclusion of language and culture in their classrooms?

This process is supportive of the immediate research aims of this project and allows it to continue for years into the future.

Implications of the Research

In this era of accountability in education, a glance at the statistical portraits presented for American Indian student achievement provokes immense concern. The Native Educators Research Project responds to this concern, suggesting that Native education can be recast as an instrument to break the bonds imposed by centuries of colonization and restructured to create and sustain learning opportunities for Native people and to ultimately rebuild Native families, communities and Indian nations. The results of this study can lead the way toward sound models and effective practices in the professional development of Native teachers and, given that the participants represent tribal nations in all regions of the United States, the results of this project will be highly generalizable.

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